

WE CLAIM:

1. A stick made of a flexible material preferably in combination with a compact container or holder, wherein said stick is provided with a dividable end and a retention end, the major portion of said stick being dividable into two elongated halves by insertion into a compact container or holder which may be provided with a separation device, causing separation of said elongated halves, and bending thereof of at least 180 degrees during said insertion resulting from contact with inner walls of said container or holder, an item being firmly attached to said retention end, said stick being retained in said divided and bent configuration, said compact container or holder being further provided with a reunification device, whereby on opening of said container or holder and withdrawal there from of said item said two elongated stick halves pass through said reunification device and are firmly rejoined thereby to form a substantially straight rigid stick supporting said item.
2. The stick as claimed in claim 1 wherein the container or holder is provided with a separation device in a form of a blade.
3. The stick as claimed in claim 1 wherein the reunification device has a cross section as of the stick.
4. The stick in combination with a compact container or holder as claimed in claim 1, said container or holder being completed by attachment thereto of a discrete closure to form a housing shape readily dispensed by a simple vending machine.
5. The stick and container as claimed in claim 4, wherein said closure is readily removable and replaceable by children to allow storage of a partially consumed.

6. The stick and container as claimed in claim 1, wherein said container is transparent.

7. The stick as claimed in claim 1, wherein said two elongated stick halves are provided with multiple interlockable teeth along their length, a bulge at each tooth extremity being accommodated by a recess between the roots of a pair of similar opposing teeth projecting from the opposite elongated half of said stick, as said stick is reconstructed by the interlocking of said two elongated halves during withdrawal from said container.

8. The stick as claimed in claim 1, being made of low-density polyethylene.

9. A packaged lollipop comprising the lollipop candy, retained on a stick as claimed in claim 1, and being encapsulated in a disposable plastic container shaped for convenient handling in a vending machine, said stick being held in its bent form while inside said container.

10. The stick as claimed in claim 1, being further provided with form irregularities at said item retention end to enhance resistance to unwanted withdrawal of said stick from said item.

11. A stick substantially as described hereinbefore and with reference to the accompanying drawings.

12. A method for the automatic marketing of items, comprising the steps:

step 1: providing a stick and container as claimed in claim 1;

step 2: attaching an item to said retention end;

step 3: optionally wrapping said item;

step 4: inserting said item into said compact container by pressing said stick against said separation device to separate and bend said elongated stick halves into said container sized and shaped for convenient handling in a vending machine;

step 5: loading a multitude of said filled containers into a vending machine; and

step 6: instructing the consumer to pull said item from said container, thereby reconstructing said stick as a rigid holder.

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